

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LAGOS 06812 211737Z

51

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-03

RSC-01 USIA-15 PRS-01 L-03 H-03 SS-15 NSC-10 RSR-01

/081 W

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R 211550Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 723

INFO AMCONSUL KADUNA

AMCONSUL IBADAN

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS, SGEN, NI

SUBJECT: AMAKIRI PRESS HARASSEMENT CASE

REF: KADUNA 0440

1. FROM DISCUSSIONS WITH LOCAL JOURNALISTS, INCLUDING CORRESPONDENT RIVERS STATE GOVERNMENT OWNED NIGERIAN TIDE, APPEARS PROBABLE THAT REPORTS TO EDITOR NEW NIGERIAN (REFTEL) THAT AMAKIRI ACTUALLY DIETE-SPIFF'S BROTHER-IN-LAW AND THAT HARASSMENT RESULT OF PURELY PERSONAL DISAGREEMENT ARE UNTRUE. GENERAL BELIEF OF CORRESPONDENTS IS THAT THIS RUMOR DELIBERATE ATTEMPT OF RIVERS STATE TO DEFUSE CONTROVERSY.

2. COMMENT: SINCE DIETE-SPIFF AND AMAKIRI COME FROM REPORTEDLY WIDELY DIFFERENT AND GENERALLY HOSTILE ETHNIC BACK-GROUNDS (IJAW AND IBO, RESPECTIVELY), WE ARE INCLINED BELIEVE PRESS ASSERTION THEY ARE NOT RELATED BY MARRIAGE. APPARENT CALL FROM MEMBER OF DIETE-SPIFF STAFF TO NEW NIGERIAN EDITOR REPORTED IN REFTEL ADDS CREDENCE TO CORRESPONDENTS' BELIEF REGARDING RIVERS STATE ORIGIN OR RUMOR. IF RUMOR SHOULD BE TRUE, HOWEVER, OR IF IT BECOMES WIDELY BELIEVED BY PUBLIC, IT MAY DEFUSE
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CRITICISM OVER PRESS HARASSMENT; AT SAME TIME CRITICISM

OF DIETE-SPIFF AS "PETTY TYRANT" WHO ABUSES POWER FOR
CAPRICIOUS PERSONAL ENDS MIGHT ACTUALLY INCREASE.
REINHARDT

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Message Attributes

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